



PRESS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY

Deseret Chemical Depot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sampling Project Successfully Completed Ahead of Schedule

DESERET CHEMICAL DEPOT, STOCKTON, Utah – Workers at the U.S. Army's Deseret Chemical Depot (DCD) in Utah's Tooele County today completed a major secondary project, removing chemical agent samples for analysis and measuring solid materials from each of DCD's original stockpile of nearly 6,400 mustard agent-filled bulk containers.

Under the joint project, Army civilians working inside DCD's munitions storage area delivered bulk containers to special sampling facilities where contract workers for EG&G Defense Materials, Inc. removed samples for analysis and characterization by site laboratory personnel. Originally scheduled to take three-and-a-half years to complete, workers completed the project 14 months earlier than scheduled.

The comprehensive sampling project confirmed that approximately 15 percent of the stockpile's inventory of mustard agent-filled bulk containers is contaminated with elevated levels of mercury. As a result, construction is under way on an additional furnace exhaust gas filtration system utilizing sulfur-impregnated carbon to capture mercury compounds from chemical weapons processing operations, ensuring maximum protection of the Utah environment.

Another important component of the sampling project measured the amount of solid or semi-solid residues, referred to as "heels", within each bulk container. Because the solid residue remains inside the containers after their liquid contents are drained, many of the heels are heavier than Utah regulatory officials allow for bulk container processing through the TOCDF metal parts furnace as-is. The sampling measurements will enable a new Heel Transfer System (HTS), inside the TOCDF plant, to reduce the weight of "heavy" heels for safe processing.

"This was a critical project, and a very successful one," said Ted Ryba, TOCDF Site Project Manager. "Everything we did was based on a need to know what was inside those bulk containers, and because of our joint EG&G/DCD sampling project, now we know. It is information we need to help us complete our mission of safely eliminating the entire DCD chemical weapons stockpile."

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Media Note: Video clips and photographs are available upon request.

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